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ABSTRACT

Designed specifically for higher education administrators, faculty, and student affairs professionals, this book provides a comprehensive overview of the principles, purposes, practices and uses of assessment, with particular emphasis on student learning and development. Nine chapters present and discuss a series of assessment steps: Chapter 1 defines assessment, recounts the background and purposes of assessment in higher education, and reviews the literature about college impact. Chapter 2 highlights several active institutional assessment programs around the country, describes the characteristics of their success, explains the need for planning the process with staff and students, and discusses several broad program applications. Chapter 3 explains how to establish program objectives, so that educators will know what they want to assess before assessing it. Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the selection and design of assessment methods, including methods of ensuring the quality of assessment information. Chapter 6 describes various aspects of information collection and maintenance, including sample issues and costs. Chapter 7 discusses techniques employed in the analysis and interpretation of assessment information. Chapter 8 emphasizes the need for using information for decision making, focusing especially on factors that influence the use of results and on the ethics of assessment. The final chapter projects the future of assessment and how it will be practiced. Appended are: (1) proficiency guidelines for rating a student's ability to speak a foreign language; (2) an alumni questionnaire; and (3) a student involvement survey. Included are 296 references. (LPT)

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